

**In the Abstract:**

Please replace the original Abstract paragraph on page 19, lines 2-8 inclusive, with the following new paragraph:

-- The invention is directed to an automated rotary microtome blade changing apparatus, comprising an upper stage adapted to releasably engage a supply and a waste cartridge, the upper stage including a loading segment adapted to engage and move blades contained within the supply cartridge into a cutting position; means for releasably clamping the blades in place for cutting operations, comprising a fixed support plate adapted to support a first side of the blade, the fixed support plate in intimate contact with the upper stage body, a clamping plate having a clamping surface capable of engaging a second side of the blade when the clamping plate is pivoted into the clamping position, a pivot means for supporting a midpoint region of the clamping plate, the pivot means itself being integral to or supported by the upper stage, a clamping cam that engages the clamping plate, the clamping cam being mounted on a drive shaft and providing motion orthogonal to the drive shaft axis thereby pivoting the clamping plate about the pivot point; means for powering the movement of blades and clamping mechanisms, comprising an electric motor mounted proximate to the drive shaft, a motor pulley mounted between the drive shaft and the electric motor and interconnected therebetween so that power from the motor is transferred to the drive shaft; and means for electronically controlling all of the functions of the apparatus, comprising a microcontroller in electrical communication with a switch on a keypad, a power source, a motor, and safety interlocks.--

**Summary**

This amendment is filed after a Notice of Allowance, but prior to payment of the issue fee, and so is properly submitted under 37 CFR 1.312(a). The amendment to the specification is merely to insert a claim for priority in the "Related Applications" section, and the new paragraph

not entered  
11/2/06